

TRUE WEST - SCENE 7 (EXCERPT)

Scene Introduction: This is act seven of *True West* and by this time Austin and Lee have traded places. Austin is now the drunk failure and Lee is the screenwriter. Lee is trying to finish a screenplay while his brother is annoying him. Austin comes up with the thought that he is now the thief because Lee is the screenwriter. They get into a fight because Austin challenges Lee that he could be a better thief than his brother. However, Lee is saying that he can't do it. Previously they made a bet for shared screen credit, but it now includes Austin's house. Lee is distracted with the fight and has lost focus on his typing. Eventually Austin gets up to leave, but falls to the floor because he's heavily drunk.

Austin:

*"Red sails in the sunset
way out on the blue
please carry my loved one
home safely to me—"*

Lee: Hey, knock it off will ya! I'm trying to concentrate here!

Austin: (laughs slightly) You're trying to concentrate?

Lee: That's right. God damn it.

Austin: Now you're trying to concentrate.

Lee: Between you, the coyotes, and the crickets the thought don't stand much of a chance.

Austin: Between me, the coyotes, and the crickets...what a great title!

Lee: I don't need a title. I need a thought.

Austin: (drunken laugh) Here's a thought for ya.

Lee: I don't need your thoughts alright! I got my own. I could do this thing on my own.

Austin: (takes a swig) You're gonna write an entire screenplay on your own?

Lee: That's right.

Austin: (drunken laugh) Here's a thought for ya. Saul Kimmer—

Lee: Just shut up will ya!

Austin: He thinks we're the same person.

Lee: Uh huh, don't get cute.

Austin: No he does! He's-He's lost his mind. (sigh) Poor old Saul, he thinks we're one in the same.

Lee: Yeah, well why don't you ease up on that champagne huh?

Austin: This isn't champagne! God, this is serious stuff. Went through the champagne a long time ago. Days of champagne, long gone!

Lee: Well go outside and drink it will ya!

Austin: I'm finally enjoying your company Lee! For the first time since your arrival I'm-I'm..I'm actually enjoying your company! Now you want me to go outside and drink alone?!

Lee: That's right.

Austin: Well you think you make more progress if you're alone? Might drive yourself crazy!

Lee: Look, I could have this thing done in a night, if I had all silence!

Austin: Yeah, well you'd still have the crickets to contend with. The police helicopters, prowling above the neighborhoods, slashing their searchlights through the streets, hunting for the likes of you!

Lee: Hey I'm a screenwriter now, alright?

(Austin laughs lightly)

Lee: I'm legitimate! God!

Austin: (laughing on the floor) A screenwriter!

Lee: Yeah look, I'm all salary ok!? It's more than I can say for you. I got an advance coming.

Austin: (recovering from laughter) Ah this is really...this is very..this is very true. We're advance.

Austin - Well, maybe I'll go outside and have a hand at your trade since you're doing so good at mine.

Lee - (laughs)

Austin: What... You don't think I got what it takes to SNEAK into somebody's house, and steal their tv?

Lee: Yeah, couldn't steal a toaster without losing your lunch

Austin: (Getting up) You don't think I can steal a toaster?

Austin: You don;t think I can sneak into somebody's house and steal their toaster?

Lee: Go take a shower or something will you?

Austin: (Defensively) Yo-you-you don't think I can steal a crummy toaster?!

Lee: (Sighs)

Austin: How much do you wanna bet. HOW MUCH YOU WANNA BET I CAN STEAL A TOASTER?

Austin: (Sneering) You're a gambling man ain'tcha? (Pause) How much you willing to put on the line? Some part of that big advance?

Austin: Oh, I forgot, you haven't gotten that yet have you....

Lee: Alright I bet you a.. a... a... your... your car! That you couldn't steal a toaster now get busted.

Austin: You already GOT my car!

Lee: Alright your house then.

Austin: (Gesturing) I'm talking about what you are going to give me!

Austin: I'm not talking about MY house, MY car, I'm talking about what you are going to give me! Because you.... have nothing to give me.

Lee: (Hesitating slightly) Alright I'll give you.... shared screen credit! I'll have them put in the contract this thing here, was written by the two of us.

Austin: I don't want my name on that piece of baloney! No! I, I, I, want something of value!

Austin: You got anything of VALUE?!

Austin: Any tidbits of value.... any... rattlesnakes.... (Pause) I'm not a greedy man! Any... little... personal treasure will suffice...

Lee: (Fed Up) I'm just about to kick your butt out of here any minute.

Austin: (Taunting) Ohhhh, now you're going to kick me out...

Austin: (Invading space) IM THE ONE THATS.... INVADING YOUR PRIVACY....

Lee: (Angrily) Look I'm trying to do some screenplay writing right here!!!.... GOD!

Austin: You got... everything you need...

Austin: You got coffee? ...Groceries... You got a car? A CONTRACT! ... You might need some new typewriter wire but other than that.... (Lee snatches away the typewriter parts) I'll just leave you alone for a while...

Lee: (Getting up) Where you going?

Austin: Don't worry about me! ...I'm not the one to worry about....

Lee: Where you gonna go Austin... just gonna wander around in the night?

Austin: (Smiling) I'm going to make a little tour...

Lee: Why don't you go to bed for Christ Sakes.. You're making me sick...

Austin: Don't worry about me!.... I.. can take care of myself! (Fall violently)

Lee: Oh! wait... Jesus Christ... You want me to call your wife...?